

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

7A-13

Orleans

N

EAS.246

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Bay Road-Campground Road

Address: 30 Bay Road

Historic Name: William and Grace Wills House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1937

Source: Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: No Style/ Bungalow

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles, Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Front porch enclosed, new windows (dates unknown)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.19 acres

Setting: This property is located on a small parcel bounded on the south and east by Bay Road. The surrounding area was subdivided with small cottage lots starting in the early-20th century, and now includes modest cottages and houses from the early-20th to the early-21st centuries. This house faces south on a slight rise. The area in front of the house is landscaped with a clamshell parking area, lawn and foundation plantings. A second parking area is located along the west side of the parcel.

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

30 BAY ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This is an astylistic example of a Bungalow. The house has the 1½-story, side-gable form, with centered dormer on the front roof slope and broad porch typical of Bungalows. The house rests on a raised concrete block foundation which is obscured on the front elevation by an open deck. The elevations are clad in weathered wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles with modestly projecting eaves. A narrow, brick chimney rises from the center of the main roof ridge. The rear roof has a broad wall dormer and a small projecting entrance enclosure (Photo 2). Windows have all been replaced with modern, 1/1 windows – the original windows likely had a more complicated muntin pattern. The front porch may have begun as an open or screened porch.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property is connected to the cottage development around Campground Road - one of the three earliest roads to extend west to Cape Cod Bay from the central sections of Eastham. Despite the early development of the road, which was established to serve the Methodist camp meetings in the mid-19th century, the great majority of houses that border it, especially to the north, are 20th-century vernacular summer cottages and retirement houses.

One of the early subdivisions at the west end of Campground Road was recorded in 1912 by Alonzo K. Higgins. It consisted of 34 "Cottage Lots" on the north side of Campground Road that included what is now the southern portion of Bay Road and West Shore Drive (Figure 2).¹ Four large parcels were aligned along the bay while smaller lots with 75-foot frontages were laid out in the interior. All but one of the bay parcels have been divided into smaller lots; and some of the small interior lots have been combined. Eastham-born Alonzo K. Higgins (1846-1918) married Elizabeth W. Rogers (1847-1923) in Orleans in 1870. He was listed as a farmer in census records throughout his life, but he was also very active in cottage development in the early-20th century.

According to title research, Lot 25 was sold by Alonzo Higgins in 1916 to William T. Wills of Orleans.² This house has an Assessor date of 1936, which is likely accurate. The annual Eastham Tax Commitment Books can assist in identifying when owners first built their houses. The Tax Books first assess William Wills with a cottage in 1937.

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 2/ Page 123.

² Book 344/ Page 534.

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Connecticut-born William Thomas Wills (1881-1947) married Grace C. Wilbur (1886-1947) in Hartford in 1905. According to census records, William Wills worked as a wholesale drug salesman. In 1946, they were still living in Orleans when they sold this house to Abbie and Philip Dubin of Arlington, MA.³ Philip Dubin (1907-1983) was listed as a store owner in the 1940 census, but by 1950 they were living in Dennis and he owned a pharmacy. In 1954, they sold this house to Joseph F. and Anna G. Vogel of Eastham. The Vogels took out a mortgage with Cape Cod Five Cents Saving Bank that same year and lost the property through a foreclosure deed in 1957. The bank sold the house that same year to Mildred R. Blakey of Eastham, and the next year she sold it to Robert S. and Ruth L. Holmes of North Eastham.⁴ Subsequent owners have included Mary Anne and Timothy S. Doyle of Old Saybrook, CT, and Robert F. and Claire Chiarello of Chappaqua, NY. It was Claire Chiarello who sold it in 1980 to the current owner, Audrey E. Henault, then of Oakdale, MA and now of North Eastham.⁵

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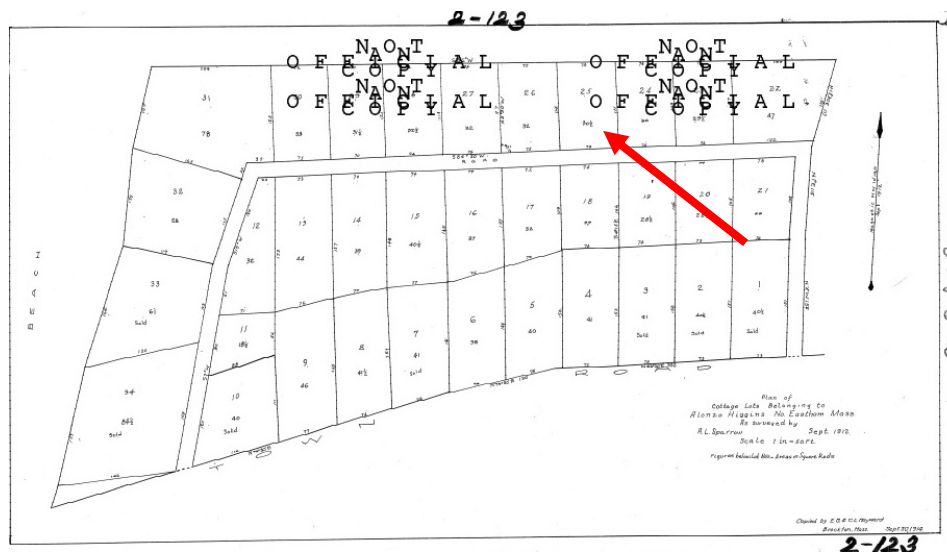


Figure 2. September 1912 Plan of Cottage Lots for Alonzo Higgins (arrow to Lot 25 added).

³ Book 654/ Page 200.

⁴ Book 874/ Page 36, 37, Book 973/ Page 78, Book 1010/ Page 318.

⁵ Book 313/ Page 93, Book 5863/ Page 2.

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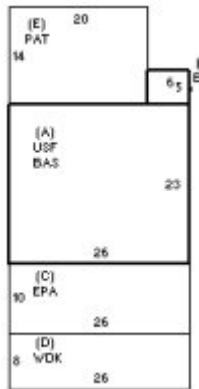


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View looking southeast.